




U.S. Serial No. 10/696,709

REMARKS

Applicants have added new claims 128-34. Support for the new claims can be found throughout the application as filed. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 124-34 will be pending.

Applicants traverse the rejection based upon U.S. Patent No. 6,316,158 to Saum *et al.* The earliest filing date claimed in the '158 patent is October 2, 1996 from provisional application 60/027,354. In making the rejection, the examiner has not analyzed the contents of the Saum provisional application to determine whether it contains the disclosure found in the '158 patent. Moreover, the examiner has not addressed the priority benefit afforded by applicants' earlier filings, namely U.S. Serial No. 08/726,313, also filed October 2, 1996, and U.S. Serial No. 08/600,744, filed February 13, 1996, which is before the filing of the Saum provisional application. The lack of such an analysis means that the examiner has not established that the '158 patent is prior art to begin with. Applicants respectfully submit that the '158 patent is not prior art, and therefore the rejection should be withdrawn. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,



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